

1. A method of distributing playable media items over an electronic network from a first computer maintained by a provider of a media distribution service to a second computer used by a subscriber of such service, the playable media items corresponding to machine readable media readable by a subscriber machine player, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) setting up a subscriber delivery queue for the subscriber to be controlled by the first computer, said subscriber delivery queue consisting of an ordered list of one or more playable media items to be delivered to the subscriber in a subscriber-defined priority;

wherein said subscriber delivery queue is set up at least in part in response to item selection directions provided by the subscriber over the network using the second computer;

- (b) setting up queue replenishment control rules for the subscriber delivery queue; and

- (c) monitoring said subscriber delivery queue in accordance with said queue replenishment control rules to determine if an additional playable media item should be added to said subscriber delivery queue; and

- (d) modifying said subscriber delivery queue to generate a new ordered list of one or more playable media items in response to the subscriber confirming that said additional playable media item can be included in said subscriber delivery queue.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the subscriber does not need to be connected to the provider over the network during step (c).

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said ordered list of one or more playable media items are set up by said subscriber-defined priority in a delivery sequence ranging from a first playable media item to be delivered from said subscriber delivery queue to a last playable media item to be delivered from said subscriber delivery queue.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein said additional playable media item is inserted in a subscriber-defined delivery order position in said new ordered list of one or more playable media items.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein said additional playable media item is automatically inserted as said first playable media item to be delivered from said new ordered list of one or more playable media items.
6. The method of claim 3, wherein said additional playable media item is automatically inserted as said last playable media item to be delivered from said new ordered list of one or more playable media items.
7. The method of claim 1, further including a step of: delivering playable media items to the subscriber based on said new ordered list of one or more playable media items.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein step (d) is performed automatically without sending a further notification to the subscriber.
9. The method of claim 1, further including a step (c)': sending a notification to the subscriber after step (c) when said queue replenishment control rules determine that said subscriber delivery queue should be modified.
10. The method of claim 9, wherein said notification does not automatically trigger a modification of said subscriber delivery queue.
11. The method of claim 9, wherein said notification specifies that said subscriber delivery queue will be automatically modified in accordance with said queue replenishment control rules.
12. The method of claim 9, wherein said notification specifies that said subscriber delivery queue will be automatically modified in accordance with said queue replenishment control rules.
13. The method of claim 12, wherein said subscriber delivery queue is automatically modified in accordance with said queue replenishment control rules after a predefined time delay.
14. The method of claim 9, wherein said notification provides directions for the subscriber to accept and/or modify said additional playable media item.
15. The method of claim 1, wherein said queue replenishment control rules include a trigger event to be used in determining when said subscriber delivery queue should be modified.
16. The method of claim 15, wherein said trigger event is associated with a quantity of playable media items remaining in said subscriber delivery queue.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein said trigger event is associated with a determination by an item recommendation system that said additional playable media item should be added to said subscriber delivery queue as a recommended playable media item.
18. The method of claim 17, wherein said recommended playable media item is designated as the next to be delivered from said subscriber delivery queue.
19. The method of claim 1, wherein said additional playable media item is automatically determined by a recommender system controlled by the provider of the media distribution service, which recommender system automatically identifies playable media items of interest to the subscriber based on a subscriber item preference profile.
20. The method of claim 19, further including a step of: processing an item rating survey provided by the subscriber to determine a subscriber item preference profile suitable for use by said recommender system.
21. The method of claim 1, wherein said additional playable media item is randomly selected from a list of playable media items associated with a category selected by the subscriber.
22. The method of claim 1, wherein said queue replenishment control rules for the subscriber delivery queue are set up automatically for the subscriber based on an evaluation of item preferences determined for the subscriber.
23. The method of claim 1, wherein said queue replenishment control rules for the subscriber delivery queue are set up by the subscriber.
24. The method of claim 1, further including a step (e): moving an item from said subscriber delivery queue to a shipping queue when the subscriber is eligible to receive an additional item.
25. The method of claim 19, further including a step of: processing an item rating survey provided by the subscriber to determine a subscriber preference profile suitable for use by said recommender system.
26. The method of claim 1, further including a step of: receiving subscriber feedback concerning a performance of said media distribution service concerning selection of said additional playable media item.

27. The method of claim 1, wherein a subscriber account is charged a fee when an additional playable media item is moved to said subscriber delivery queue.
28. The method of claim 1, wherein the media distribution service distributes movies to the subscribers.
29. The method of claim 28, wherein the media distribution service is an Internet based movie rental service, and the playable media items are recordings of movies that are mailed to subscribers.
30. The method of claim 29, wherein the subscriber pays a flat rate service fee for having a predetermined number of recordings checked out of the Internet based movie rental service.
31. The method of claim 30, wherein a subscriber account is charged an additional fee when an additional playable media item is actually distributed to the subscriber.
32. The method of claim 28, wherein said movies are distributed electronically to the subscribers.
33. The method of claim 32, wherein said movies are distributed by a satellite transmission to a satellite signal receiver.
34. The method of claim 32, wherein said movies are distributed by a broadband Internet-based connection.

35. A method of distributing playable media items comprising the steps of:
- (a) setting up a subscriber selection queue for the subscriber, said subscriber selection queue consisting of a list of one or more playable media items to be viewed by the subscriber;
wherein said subscriber selection queue is set up at least in part in response to item selection directions provided by the subscriber;
 - (b) setting up queue replenishment control rules for the subscriber selection queue;
and
 - (c) monitoring said subscriber selection queue in accordance with said queue replenishment control rules to determine if changes should be made to said subscriber selection queue; and
 - (d) modifying said subscriber selection queue to generate a new list of one or more playable media items based on a confirmation from the subscriber.

36. A method of distributing playable media items over an electronic network to a subscriber of a media rental service, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) receiving subscriber preference data for the subscriber during a first data session, including notification and shipment options;
- 5 (b) generating a subscriber profile for the subscriber suitable for use by a recommender system;
- (c) processing said subscriber profile using said recommender system to identify a media item that is likely to be of interest to the subscriber ;
- (d) notifying the subscriber and shipping said media item to the subscriber in
10 accordance with said subscriber preference data;

wherein said media item can be automatically shipped to the subscriber after said first data session, and without requiring a second data session by the subscriber with said media rental service.